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SPACE

170

714.00(W)/12-453
F790004-1177

FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM : AMEMBASSY, GUATEMALA 477
DESP. NO.

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON. December 4, 1953
DATE

DEC 8 1953

REF :

For Dept. Use Only	ACTION	DEPT.
	CAI-10	INFO DC/R-2 I-3 IIPS-1 IIBS-2 AKA
	REC'D 12/7	INFO OTHER AXMY-35 NAVY-39 AIR-24 CIA-10 OSD-2 OCB-1

SUBJECT: Joint Weeka No. 49 for State, Army and Air Departments from S - Section I.

Action Taken

12-7-53

DECLASSIFICATION DATE 13 Jul 78
PER Colombia OFFICE AARA
EADRC FOI CASE NO. 71053

SUMMARY

Víctor Manuel GUTIERREZ, Communist Secretary General of the CGTG, returned to Guatemala from Moscow this week at the head of the Guatemalan delegation which had toured the Soviet Union after the Vienna WFTU Congress. In his first public statement he stressed the theme of "unity of action" between the working class, the peasants and "progressive" elements, a theme which has been the leitmotiv of the local Communist line in the past two months in the drive for an enlarged "National Democratic Front" to consist of the Administration parties, the labor and agricultural federations, and women's, youth's and students' "mass" organizations.

The Communist-front women's organization, Alianza Femenina Guatemalteca (AFG), held its First Congress and featured an address by Sra. ARBENZ, the wife of the Guatemalan President, who was revealed as a member. Continued Communist-control of this organization was assured by the election of Communists, many of them wives of party officials, to the key Executive Committee positions.

The decay of the fellow-traveling Administration parties was highlighted in a riotous session of Congress in which one Deputy was accused of blackmailing businessmen, the President of Congress was referred to as a "gangster" for allegedly intimidating a polling place with his pistol, and a visibly drunken Administration politician, Francisco FERNANDEZ Foncea, accused the Minister of the Interior of misappropriating $80,000.

DOMESTIC AFFAIRS

Communist Leaders Back From Moscow Stress "Unity of Action" Theme: Underscoring the reliance of the Guatemalan Communist leadership on Soviet guidance, Víctor Manuel Gutiérrez, Communist Secretary General of the sole national labor federation, CGTG, returned from Moscow on November 29 with renewed stress

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on the "unity of action" theme in his first published statements. José Manuel FORTUNY, Secretary General of the Guatemalan Communist party. PGT, was still away during the week on his trip to the Soviet capital and Soviet intentions in this country may be further clarified after his return.

Meanwhile there were other preliminary indications that the "unity of action" theme would continue to dominate the local Communist line. Leonardo CASTILLO Flores, the fellow-traveling Secretary General of the national small farmers' and agricultural workers' federation, CNCG, also returned from Moscow with Gutiérrez's party and, to judge by a rhapsodic press interview he gave on Soviet conditions and "fraternal spirit" at the Vienna WFTU Congress they attended, he may be expected to work in still closer harmony with the Communists. Gutiérrez's party also included José Luis RAMOS, head of the Campesino Commission of the PGT, Gabriel CAMEY, Communist mayor-elect of Escuintla, and four lesser labor figures. The support of the "unity of action" by the returning labor leaders fitted in with the PGT's current drive for a strengthened "National Democratic Front" (Weeka 44).

Congress of Communist Front Women's Organization: Highlighting the increasing role of Communist front "mass" organizations, the Alianza Femenina Guatemalteca (AFG) held its First Congress on November 26-28 in a government school auditorium and was addressed by Sra. María Vilanova de Arbenz, the First Lady, who revealed that she had been a founding member of the organization in 1947. She spoke of the role of women in the Revolution and was photographed beneath a live white Dove of Peace. Continued Communist control of the organization was assured by the reelection of Srta. Dora FRANCO y Franco, almost certainly a Communist, as Secretary General, and of Sra. Irma Chávez de ALVARADO, head of Communist PGT's Women's Commission and wife of the PGT Secretary for Organization, as Secretary for Organization. Sra. Elsa GUERRA Borges, the Communist wife (reportedly divorced) of the PGT Secretary for Propaganda, was elected Secretary for Propaganda, and Sra. María Jerez de Fortuny, wife of the PGT Secretary General, was elected to the executive Committee. The Congress adopted resolutions in favor of peace, a number supporting the Arbenz Administration program, and a series for the improvement of the status of women and children.

Revolutionary Parties Wash Dirty Linen in Congress: Showing the corruption and back-biting in what the Communists call the "petit-bourgeois" Revolutionary parties, the Guatemalan Congress on November 27 was the scene of a bitter session in which José Felipe DARDON, PAR Deputy, was charged with blackmailing auto parts dealers for $5,000 on the threat of pressing through a bill to limit their profits; Guillermo OVANDO Arriola, the President of Congress who is currently charged with intimidating a polling place, tried to deny he was undermining Dardón; and Francisco

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Fernández Foncea, ex-PAR Secretary General, came to Dardón's defense in a drunken speech accusing the Deputies of yapping like a "pack of dogs" after a person who had only stolen a loaf of bread while ignoring the "great thieves of the Revolution" including Augusto CHARNAUD MacDonald, Minister of the Interior, who had acquired an $80,000 property on the main business avenue. Charnaud MacDonald later published a certificate that he owned no such property, but the scene in Congress further lowered the prestige of the Administration politicians and gave the Communists an opportunity to claim superior dedication and honesty.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Continued Uncertainty About Guatemalan Participation In Caracas Conference: Continuing the leftist agitation against the U.S.-sponsored item on the Caracas Conference agenda concerning Communist intervention in hemispheric affairs, a meeting of Secretaries General of unions affiliated with the Communist-controlled CGTG this week voted to stage a large mass protest demonstration "before the Guatemalan delegation leaves for Caracas," according to the Communist Tribuna Popular. The phraseology suggests that at the moment Communist circles still expect Guatemala to attend the Conference, but there has been no further official announcement concerning the government's plans.

PSYCHOLOGICAL

Leftists Attack Dr. Eisenhower's Report As Independent Press Takes Away: Dr. Milton Eisenhower's report on his trip through Latin America was the subject of sustained attacks during the past fortnight by the Communist Tribuna Popular, and the leftist newspapers Nuestro Diario and Diario del Pueblo, all of which in varying degrees claimed that it shielded the United States' intention to dominate Latin America and that private U.S. investment inevitably brought colonialism and interference in its wake. The independent press, in contrast, published the text or summaries of the report but shied away from editorial comment except for Prensa Libre which first endorsed Dr. Eisenhower's recommendation for a strengthened U.S. information effort but later objected touchily to his statement that one nation had succumbed to Communist infiltration, saying that Communists here were without any real popular backing.

LABOR

CGTG and CNCG Affiliation to WFTU Confirmed: Gutiérrez and the other delegates returning from Moscow after attending the Vienna WFTU Congress reported that both the national labor federation, CGTG, and the national small farmers' and farm workers' federation, CNCG, had been formally recognized as WFTU affiliates at the Vienna Congress.

Desp. No. 477
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UNCLASSIFIED
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Encl. No.
Desp. No.
From

F790004-1180 AMERICAN INTERESTS

Strike Vote on United Fruit Company's Atlantic Plantations Near Completion: Guatemalan Labor Inspector this week were reported to have informed the Inspectorate General of Labor that the strike vote among the workers of the United Fruit Company's Bananera Division on the Atlantic slope (Weeka 44) had thus far resulted in a count 66 votes short of the two-thirds majority necessary to make it possible for the Labor Courts to declare a strike. The Labor Inspectors were reportedly ordered to drum up 66 votes from among those who had not yet balloted and the press expects the final results to be turned over to the Labor Courts shortly.

FOR THE AMBASSADOR

William L. Krieg
Counselor of Embassy

cc: AmEmbassy, Moscow
C. A. Missions & Routine

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